

2-2-2015

# A Mother's Lesson of Love and Letting Go

University of Dayton

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## Recommended Citation

University of Dayton. "A Mother's Lesson of Love and Letting Go" (2015). [http://wayback.archive-it.org/4727/20160115031044/https://www.udayton.edu/news/articles/2015/02/god\\_box.php](http://wayback.archive-it.org/4727/20160115031044/https://www.udayton.edu/news/articles/2015/02/god_box.php)

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# NEWS



*Monday February 2, 2015*

## A Mother's Lesson of Love and Letting Go

Mary Lou Quinlan is bringing her acclaimed one-woman show, "The God Box, A Daughter's Story," to campus March 30-31 to benefit the Erma Bombeck Writers' Workshop.

"The God Box, A Daughter's Story," will be presented at 7 p.m. March 30 and March 31 at the University of Dayton's Boll Theatre as a benefit for the Erma Bombeck Writers' Workshop

endowment.

In this engaging one-woman, one-act play based on her *New York Times*' best-selling book, Mary Lou Quinlan explores the laughter and tears of the story of a family in love, in loss and in triumph. The show has played across the U.S., off-Broadway and at the prestigious Edinburgh Festival Fringe, where a five-star critical review claimed, "a beautiful play with a heart full of love behind it."

Tickets are \$15-\$50, and group rates are available. For tickets, visit [tickets.udayton.edu](http://tickets.udayton.edu), call 927-229-2545 or visit the box office. Located on the first floor of Kennedy Union, the box office is open 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., Mondays through Fridays, and 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Saturdays. Parking is available in Lots B and C.

Here are the details for the two performances:

**7 p.m. March 30, Boll Theatre.** Tickets: \$25 (includes keepsake hardcover book) or \$15. Group rate: Buy four tickets, get one free. "Talkback" follows the show: "Writing Your Heart Out," with Mary Lou Quinlan joining local authors Katrina Kittle, Mary McCarty, Sharon Short and Joanne Huist Smith onstage.

**7 p.m. March 31, Boll Theatre.** "The Bombeck Family Special Benefit for the Erma Bombeck Writers' Workshop." Tickets: \$50 (includes keepsake hardcover book and dessert reception). Emcee: Cheryl McHenry, WHIO-TV anchor. "Talkback" follows the show: "A Mother's Bond," featuring Betsy Bombeck and Mary Lou Quinlan onstage.

Like many who lose a loved one, Quinlan, an overachieving and devoted daughter, struggled to come to terms with the death of her mother until her remarkable discovery of her mother's "God Boxes," filled with hundreds of private petitions written by the very hand that had slipped away.

The notes trigger Quinlan's unraveling, an emotional roller coaster of the heart, revealing things about her mother and herself that she never knew and driving her to the ultimate human challenge — learning to let go.

This true story, written by Quinlan, became a *New York Times*' best-selling book *The God Box* and inspired her solo show. Performed by Quinlan, and co-written and directed by Martha Wollner of New York City's Labyrinth Theater Company, this theatrical piece follows Quinlan on the journey of a lifetime.

Quinlan, a charismatic storyteller with a blue-chip career as a CEO, entrepreneur, author and speaker, has performed the show across the U.S. for three years, including a sold-out New York run at 59 East

59th Theater Off-Broadway as well as 24 performances this past summer at the world-renowned Edinburgh Festival Fringe in Scotland to rave reviews.

After Quinlan served as a keynote speaker at the sold-out Erma Bombeck Writers' Workshop in 2014, she offered to bring her one-woman show to campus to support the workshop's efforts to remain affordable for writers from all levels of experience from all over the country.

"Mary Lou is as generous and gracious as she is talented," said Teri Rizvi, founder and co-director of the Erma Bombeck Writers' Workshop. "She shares her mother's gift of faith, love and letting go in a show that entertains and moves audiences. In the spirit of her mother, she donates all proceeds to causes she believes in — from women's health issues to education. It's beyond inspiring."

Proceeds from performances of "The God Box, A Daughter's Story" have raised more than \$250,000 for charities supporting cancer and hospice care, education and community causes. More information is available on [www.theGodBoxProject.com](http://www.theGodBoxProject.com).

The March 30-31 performances are co-sponsored by the Dayton Rotary Club Foundation; CareSource Foundation; PNC; Mauro Orthodontics; the University of Dayton's Alumni Association; Office of Special Programs and Continuing Education; Provost's Office; Communication Department; the Women's Center; the School of Education and Health Sciences; Division of Student Development; Merle Wilberding & Susan Elliott; Erik and Kelly Freudenberg, HORAN; Jack and Vicki Giambrone; Greg and Mindy Hoffbauer; and Zafar and Teri Rizvi. WHIO-TV is the media co-sponsor, and Washington-Centerville Public Library is providing promotional support. Other support provided by Progressive Printers, University of Dayton Bookstore, Bob Ross Buick, Dayton Marriott, Walling Photography LLC and Skip Peterson Photography.

In 2004, University of Dayton alumnus Ralph Hamberg and his wife, Cindy, gave a \$100,000 gift to start a workshop endowment fund in memory of her cousin, Brother Tom Price, S.M. This University of Dayton English professor first told Erma "three little words" of encouragement, "You can write!" The Hamberg family, the Bombeck family and other supporters continue to contribute to the endowment fund, which allows the University of Dayton to keep the workshop affordable for writers.

Contact Teri Rizvi, founder of the Erma Bombeck Writers' Workshop, at [rizvi@udayton.edu](mailto:rizvi@udayton.edu).